

USPTO Serial Number: 09/775,265
Paul Clark Blalock et al.
Response to Office Action mailed April 28, 2006

Amendment to the Claims:

1-102. (canceled)

103. (New) A computer-implemented method of conducting auction transactions for shipping services, comprising:

providing a log-in screen for shippers and carriers to access the auction transactions with a valid authorization code; and

providing a main screen for selecting between approving carriers to bid on the auction transactions and presenting requests for proposal (RFQ) to approved carriers,

the steps of approving carriers including,

(a) providing a carrier list screen for displaying an identifier for each carrier, and

(b) providing a carrier storefront screen for taking actions with respect to each carrier including options for the shipper to add selected carriers to approved bidder list, invite selected carriers to respond to posted RFQs, and communicate with selected carriers;

the steps of presenting RFQs including,

(c) providing a carrier profile screen for displaying RFQ information, including an auction identifier, shipping lanes, origin, destination, demand, accessorial charges for services, matrix of mileage rates for geographical zones, bidding-related temporal data, and status, the status being selected from the group consisting of private, announced, active, and complete, wherein the accessorial charges for services are linked to the shipping lanes to consolidate bidding during the auction transaction,

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(d) providing a shipping lane screen for displaying shipping lane information, including name, standard carrier alpha code, over the road, and intermodal information, the shipping lane information being selectably displayed by the shipper for the carriers,

(e) providing a filter screen for searching the RFQ information and sorting the shipping lane information,

(f) providing a carrier status screen for displaying the carrier information, including name, standard carrier alpha code, and carrier status, the carrier status information for the carrier having a state selected from the group consisting of rejected, qualifying, approved, and inactive, and

(g) providing an RFQ award screen for displaying award of bids of the shipping lanes for previous rounds and current round, wherein the RFQ award screen has the option of enabling or blocking award of bids by non-winning carriers.

104. (New) The computer-implemented method of claim 103, wherein the shipping lane information includes origin, destination, miles, and type.

105. (New) The computer-implemented method of claim 104, wherein the shipping lane information further includes market, demand, number of bids, capacity, and price.

106. (New) The computer-implemented method of claim 103, wherein the shipper can electronically accept or decline a carrier bid.

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107. (New) The computer-implemented method of claim 103, wherein the over the road information includes minimum charge, rate per mile, total bid, capacity of carrier, surge capacity, award capacity, total capacity, award level, accepted, and transit days.

108. (New) The computer-implemented method of claim 103, wherein the accessorial charges include name, code, amount, and bid rule.

109. (New) The computer-implemented method of claim 103, the award of bids includes shipping lane identifier, load, bid, and price.

110. (New) A computer-implemented method of conducting auction transactions for shipping services, comprising:

- providing a log-in screen for sellers and buyers to access the auction transactions with a valid authorization code; and

- providing a main screen for selecting between approving sellers to bid on the auction transactions and presenting requests for proposal (RFQ) to approved sellers,

- the steps of approving sellers including,

- (a) providing a seller list screen for displaying an identifier for each seller, and

- (b) providing a seller storefront screen for taking actions with respect to each seller including options for the buyer to add selected sellers to approved bidder list, invite selected sellers to respond to posted RFQs, and communicate with selected sellers;

- the steps of presenting RFQs including,

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(c) providing a seller profile screen for displaying RFQ information, including an auction identifier, shipping lanes, origin, destination, demand, accessorial charges for services, matrix of mileage rates for geographical zones, and status, the status being selected from the group consisting of private, announced, active, and complete,

(d) providing a shipping lane screen for displaying shipping lane information,

(e) providing a filter screen for searching the RFQ information and sorting the shipping lane information,

(f) providing a seller status screen for displaying seller status having a state selected from the group consisting of rejected, qualifying, approved, and inactive, and

(g) providing an RFQ award screen for displaying award of bids of the shipping lanes for previous rounds and current round, wherein the RFQ award screen has the option of enabling or blocking award of bids by non-winning sellers.

111. (New) The computer-implemented method of claim 110, wherein the accessorial charges for services are linked to the shipping lanes to consolidate bidding during the auction transaction.

112. (New) The computer-implemented method of claim 110, the shipping lane information including name, over the road, and intermodal information, the shipping lane information being selectably displayed by the buyer for the sellers.

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113. (New) The computer-implemented method of claim 112, wherein the shipping lane information further includes origin, destination, miles, and type. -

114. (New) The computer-implemented method of claim 113, wherein the shipping lane information further includes market, demand, number of bids, capacity, and price.

115. (New) The computer-implemented method of claim 110, wherein the buyer can electronically accept or decline a seller bid.

116. (New) The computer-implemented method of claim 110, wherein the over the road information includes minimum charge, rate per mile, total bid, capacity of carrier, surge capacity, award capacity, total capacity, award level, accepted, and transit days.

117. (New) The computer-implemented method of claim 110, wherein the accessorial charges include name, code, amount, and bid rule.

118. (New) The computer-implemented method of claim 110, the award of bids includes shipping lane identifier, load, bid, and price.

119. (New) A computer program product usable with a programmable computer processor having a computer readable program code embodied therein, comprising:
computer readable program code which provides a log-in

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screen for shippers and carriers to access the auction transactions with a valid authorization code; and

computer readable program code which provides a main screen for selecting between approving carriers to bid on the auction transactions and presenting requests for proposal (RFQ) to approved carriers,

the code which approves carriers including,

(a) providing a carrier list screen for displaying an identifier for each carrier, and

(b) providing a carrier storefront screen for taking actions with respect to each carrier including options for the shipper to add selected carriers to approved bidder list, invite selected carriers to respond to posted RFQs, and communicate with selected carriers;

the code which presents RFQs including,

(c) providing a carrier profile screen for displaying RFQ information, including an auction identifier, shipping lanes, origin, destination, demand, accessorial charges for services, matrix of mileage rates for geographical zones, bidding-related temporal data, and status, the status being selected from the group consisting of private, announced, active, and complete,

(d) providing a shipping lane screen for displaying shipping lane information, including name, standard carrier alpha code, over the road, and intermodal information, the shipping lane information being selectably displayed by the shipper for the carriers,

(e) providing a filter screen for searching the RFQ information and sorting the shipping lane information,

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(f) providing a carrier status screen for displaying the carrier information, including name, standard carrier alpha code, and carrier status, the carrier status information for the carrier having a state selected from the group consisting of rejected, qualifying, approved, and inactive, and

(g) providing an RFQ award screen for displaying award of bids of the shipping lanes for previous rounds and current round, wherein the RFQ award screen has the option of enabling or blocking award of bids by non-winning carriers.

120. (New) The computer program product of claim 119, wherein the shipping lane information includes origin, destination, miles, and type.

121. (New) The computer program product of claim 120, wherein the shipping lane information further includes market, demand, number of bids, capacity, and price.

122. (New) A computer system for conducting auction transactions for shipping services, comprising:

means for providing a log-in screen for shippers and carriers to access the auction transactions with a valid authorization code; and

means for providing a main screen for selecting between approving carriers to bid on the auction transactions and presenting requests for proposal (RFQ) to approved carriers,

the means of approving carriers including,

(a) means for providing a carrier list screen for displaying an identifier for each carrier, and

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(b) means for providing a carrier storefront screen for taking actions with respect to each carrier including options for the shipper to add selected carriers to approved bidder list, invite selected carriers to respond to posted RFQs, and communicate with selected carriers;

the means of presenting RFQs including,

(c) means for providing a carrier profile screen for displaying RFQ information, including an auction identifier, shipping lanes, origin, destination, demand, accessorial charges for services, matrix of mileage rates for geographical zones, bidding-related temporal data, and status, the status being selected from the group consisting of private, announced, active, and complete,

(d) means for providing a shipping lane screen for displaying shipping lane information, including name, standard carrier alpha code, over the road, and intermodal information, the shipping lane information being selectably displayed by the shipper for the carriers,

(e) means for providing a filter screen for searching the RFQ information and sorting the shipping lane information,

(f) means for providing a carrier status screen for displaying the carrier information, including name, standard carrier alpha code, and carrier status, the carrier status information for the carrier having a state selected from the group consisting of rejected, qualifying, approved, and inactive, and

(g) means for providing an RFQ award screen for displaying award of bids of the shipping lanes for previous rounds and current round, wherein the RFQ award screen has the

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option of enabling or blocking award of bids by non-winning carriers.

123. (New) The computer system of claim 122, wherein the shipping lane information includes origin, destination, miles, and type.

124. (New) The computer system of claim 123, wherein the shipping lane information further includes market, demand, number of bids, capacity, and price.

125. (New) The computer system of claim 122, wherein the shipper can electronically accept or decline a carrier bid.

126. (New) The computer system of claim 122, wherein the over the road information includes minimum charge, rate per mile, total bid, capacity of carrier, surge capacity, award capacity, total capacity, award level, accepted, and transit days.

127. (New) The computer system method of claim 122, wherein the accessorial charges include name, code, amount, and bid rule.

128. (New) The computer system of claim 122, the award of bids includes shipping lane identifier, load, bid, and price.